

Art Gaze

FREE MAGAZINE

March 2008

Vol.2 No.1

MARTAS GALLERY AND CAFE
Townsville's newest art venue

NATURE OF THURINGOWA
Community Art Project

SYLVIA DITCHBURN
Beijing Residency

Townsville Visual Art Magazine

Contents

Art Gaze Magazine

For all enquiries
Jak Henson

artgaze@fastmail.com.au

Mobile 0400 297 301

(Mon - Fri, 5-7pm)

Website available from

30th March 2008

www.artgaze.com.au

PO Box 50

Townsville Q 4810

Publisher

Jak Henson

Editor

Jak Henson

Proofreader

Carolyn Pike

Printed by

3E Innovative

PO Box 386

Salisbury Q 4107

Front Cover: Cassandra Schultz,
detail of book, *Chinese Whispers*
series. Photo: Jak Henson

9 Martas Gallery and Café
Jacqui Stock speaks to Doris Kuenstler, Gallery Director of Townsville's newest Gallery.

11 Groov, bringing art to the coffee
Renee Joyce finds out how Kath Cornwall has made a place for art in alternative spaces.

12 Happy Birthday, A Little White Space
One year old already!

12 Nature of Thuringowa
Quintin Wood discovers the fun surrounding Townsville and Thuringowa's amalgamation through a community art event.

14 Beijing Residency
Sylvia Ditchburn discusses her recent residency in Beijing with Jacqui Stock.

16 Profiling local talent
Ann-Marie Lesca talks to Alison McDonald about her involvement in the arts and her upcoming exhibition.

Reviews

17 Pouch, Cassandra Schultz
Reviewed by Jak Henson

18 At First Blush, Jacqueline Jakovljevic
Reviewed by Renee Joyce

19 Finger Licking Good
Reviewed by Rod Cockroft

19 Art In The Burdekin
Reviewed by Ann-Marie Lesca



Art Gaze gratefully acknowledges the support of its sponsors in 2008.

The editor takes no responsibility for the authority of articles included. The information published, although believed to be accurate, is not guaranteed. The opinions expressed may not be the opinions of the editor. No part of this publication is to be reused without permission. But please read it and pass it on.

Editorial

Jak Henson

2008 is already proving to be a great year for art and artists. The new Martas Gallery was filled with guests on their opening night in early February, with some familiar faces as well as quite a few new faces. It's great to see a growing diversity of interest in the arts.

Including Martas Gallery, there have been at least four new Townsville art galleries that have opened in the past two years, including Iesha Stewart, Gallery 48 and A Little White Space. There has also been a dramatic increase in the use of alternative spaces to show art, such as dancenorth australia, Casey's Deli and various retail stores and coffee

shops. I find myself more and more wandering into a shop or venue in Townsville and being drawn to the walls to look at original artwork.

Whilst Art Gaze focuses on local artists and events, it is great to see artists who are no longer based in Townsville return to hold an exhibition, such as Cassandra Schultz's *Pouch*, in January. It is equally exciting to see Townsville based artists exploring their opportunities and exhibiting outside familiar ground. Sylvia Ditchburn recently held a residency in Beijing, which was inspired by another local artist's residency in China.

World wide opportunities for local artists are available for those who are looking for adventure, however local opportunities have expanded and are continuing to grow.

It's not only a great time for artists in Townsville but an exciting time for those who enjoy art.

Thank you for supporting Art Gaze.

Art Gaze will also be online from 30th March,

www.artgaze.com.au



Left: The transportation of Ditchburn's canvas', Beijing, 2007. Refer page 14



Free 2008 Subscription

INCLUDES Vol 2. No. 2 July 2008
No. 3 Nov 2008

To receive *Art Gaze* direct to your mail box, subscribe online, by email, text, or mail
Just send the following details:

Name _____
Company (If applicable) _____
Postal Address _____

Online: www.artgaze.com.au (website available from 30th March)

Email: artgaze@fastmail.com.au

Text: 0400 297 301

Mail: PO Box 50, Townsville, Q, 4810



3E INNOVATIVE

has a range of books, catalogues and brochures available.

Ring NOW
for a quote or visit:

<http://www.3e.net.au/quotes>



CREATIVE COMBO \$291

2 kinds x 1000

(100 x 100mm) A2+ 350 gsm, colour 2 sides



1000 x 8pp A5 CATALOGUE \$1,295

inc GST*

350gsm

colour throughout

YOUR OWN WEBSITE \$275

from as little as

(art practitioners only)



Includes:

- Home page
- Gallery Page
- CV & Statement Page
- Contact Page
- Hosting
- Artsguide Domain
- CMS Builder
- Online Community
- Online Tutorial
- Browser Compatibility



1800 818 320 | info@3e.net.au | www.3e.net.au | online print shop

arts entertainment technology design media sports

'servicing those who create'

- ✿ copyright
- ✿ author's right
- ✿ trademarks
- ✿ registered designs
- ✿ patents
- ✿ royalties
- ✿ licensing



BOULTON CLEARY & KERN LAWYERS

Intellectual Property Lawyers



For all IP needs call Jeff Guy @ BCK

T (07) 4772 9200 F (07) 4772 9222 bck.lawyers@bck.com.au www.bck.com.au

The Blue Art Shop

Now open Saturdays

10% discount
for students
and all
art societies

The Blue Art Shop supplies a great range of art products including Atelier and Art Spectrum paints, Arches and Exotic papers, artist books or techniques in any media, catering to the professional, student and the hobbyist. If it isn't in store we will do our best to order it in for you. Adult art classes are also available in oils, acrylics, drawing and watercolour.

The Blue Art Shop
33 RENDLE Street
Aitkenvale Ph /Fax 47799928
www.blueart@bigpond.net.au
Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
Saturday 9am-1pm

a little white space

an artists run contemporary art initiative
featuring young and emerging local artists

Hundreds @ Thousands

Natalie Adams, Feb 22 - Mar 16

The Ampersand Heretic

Angela Hughes @ Shane Keen, Mar 21 - Apr 13

location The Brewery (beneath the clock tower) 252 Flinders St Townsville QLD 4810

contact Jeannette Hutchinson, 0416 980 323 Erwin Cruz, 0403 930 512
PO Box 18 Belgian Gardens QLD 4810 a_littlewhitespace@hotmail.com

proudly supported by The Brewery, BCatered, and TBD Communication Design



PERC TUCKER REGIONAL GALLERY

ONE DENHAM ST
AND
FLINDERS MALL

Phone » 07 4727 9011
Fax » 07 4772 3656
Email » ptrg@townsville.qld.gov.au
Web » www.townsville.qld.gov.au/perctucker

HOURS

Mon - Fri » 10am to 5pm
Sat - Sun » 10am to 2pm
Closed Public Holidays
FREE ADMISSION



THE LINE 23 JANUARY - 30 MARCH



Tate Adams

Tate Adams has painted a seven metre gouache, using a large, squat brush much like a Chinese calligrapher's. This work, The Line, forms the core of the exhibition that includes subtle geometric paintings by Margaret Wilson, large format black and white paintings by Vince Bray, plus works from the Collection: drawings by James Gleeson and prints by Graeme Peebles, Jack Clutterbuck, Fiona Foley and Glen Skein.

PROPS FOR BARCELONA TWO STEP 8 FEBRUARY - 6 APRIL



Mona Ryder

Recent work by Sydney based artist, Mona Ryder. Known for her innovative sculptures, Mona Ryder explores the erotic and violent from a feminist perspective.

Perc Tucker Regional Gallery

Tropical Banners

Rod Cockroft

Opens 8th March, 11am

Vivacious and brightly coloured are the 12 canvas banners that will adorn the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery from 3rd - 30th March. The banners accompany watercolour paintings for the launch of the childrens' book "Marty and Maggie see

a Dolphin" illustrated and written by local artist Rod Cockroft. The book and banners celebrate the joy of living in our regional piece of paradise.

The spiritual and positive environmental appreciation in Cockroft's work portray the oneness of family and nature as we live our life with dreams of joy and peace. Expressionism and Realism come together in the paintings. This is particularly notable in "Townsville Flowers", "Tropical Fruit" and "Koala".

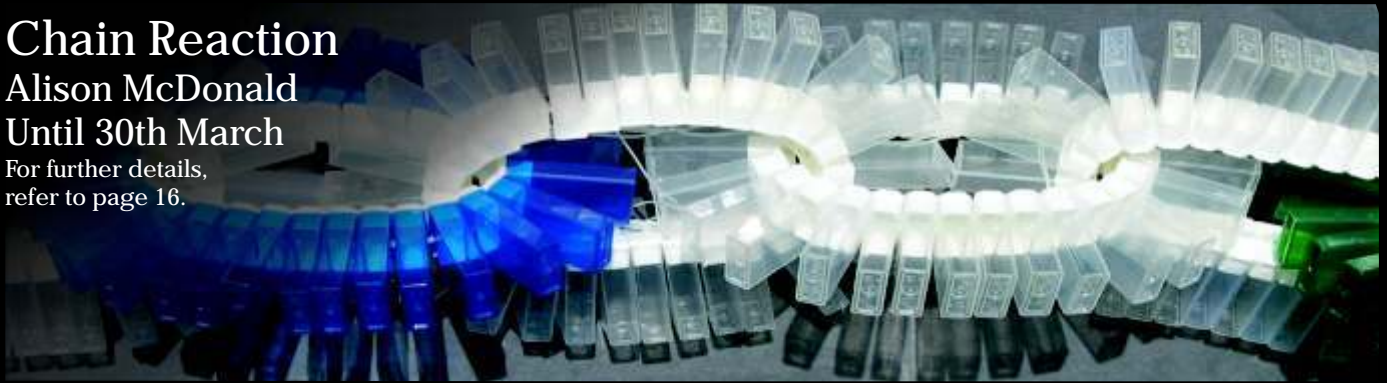
Umbrella Studio

Chain Reaction

Alison McDonald

Until 30th March

For further details,
refer to page 16.



Gallery 48 celebrating Vince Bray's exhibition

and Christmas



Janet Fountain 'Drawings and details' from Saturday 8 March to 15 May

See web site for details www.gallery48.org or phone (07) 4724 4898

Please phone to arrange viewing of work

SOCA

**James Cook University
School of Creative Arts**

and
GALLERY
new building, opening 2008



Offering contemporary curricula at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, allowing creative artists an opportunity to flourish in an environment of traditional and new media, within cutting edge spaces and learning environments.

- ① Diploma of Creative Arts
- ① Bachelor of Creative Industries
- ① Bachelor of New Media Arts
- ① Honours degrees in Music, Visual Arts, Theatre, Photography and Communication Design

- ① Graduate Diploma of Creative Arts
- ① Master of Creative Arts
- ① Master of Music
- ① PHD

creativearts@jcu.edu.au
www.jcu.edu.au/soca



Martas Gallery

Townsville's newest art venue

Jacqui Stock

As one Townsville arts institution closes, another opens. With Flinders Gallery closing, many of Townsville's artists were left searching for a new venue and it seems that Martas Gallery & Café may well be just what they are looking for.

The new gallery and café at 86 Ogden Street, Townsville opened its doors to the public on Friday, 1 February 2008.

The night was also a celebration of the gallery's first exhibition 'Bent Over Backwards', opened by well-known Townsville artist Dr Anneke Silver, with music provided by Magnetic Island's and Townsville's combined renowned choir Aquapella.

The gallery is the brainchild of Doris Kuenstler, whose name coincidentally is German for artist, and her husband Dimitru Damian-Veliche (DiViDe).

Their hope is that not only people who love art, but others will come to enjoy the ambiance and relax with a coffee or drink.

"I hope people will really use it [the gallery]," Ms Kuenstler said.

"That it will be a focal point for artists, musicians, poets and actors here in Townsville."

Kuenstler is herself a graduate of James Cook University with a Bachelor of Visual Arts majoring in illustration but has worked for the past few years with the Department of Child Safety, most recently managing a residential home for Anglicare.

Her love of art extended itself on meeting DiViDe, himself a successful artist in Germany and the two were married last May before DiViDe joined Kuenstler in Townsville.

The pair realized there were not enough outlets available for DiViDe to continue to exhibit his art here in the tropics due to most of our local galleries being booked at least a year ahead. The answer was obvious, start their own.

"We're very excited, it's a big adventure," Ms Kuenstler said,

"You could say we have lost our heart and soul to the gallery."

The road to completion has been far from smooth with difficulties finding tradesman, amongst other things, causing them to abandon their initial opening date of December 2007.

However with the help of friends the wait is now over and the gallery has opened its doors.

'Bent Over Backwards' was exhibited until 28th February,



Martasgallery. Photo: Jacqui Stock

with a solo exhibition by Brisbane-based artist Michèle Deveze opening on 1st March 2008.

'Bent Over Backwards' featured the work of Anthony Cuthbertson, DiViDe, Martin Kizur, Jenny Mulcahy, Monica Prochazka, Jet James, Lee-Anne Trewartha and Di West.

Cuthbertson, a local artist from Magnetic Island, was featured heavily in the gallery with his installation 'Displacement' taking centre stage. The work inspires thoughts of the bones of the sea, its ribs displaced from their purpose, a ghost ship with no one at the tiller.

Another work of Cuthbertson's, 'Eternal Life', graced the rear wall of the gallery. Completed over four panels, the painting, executed in oils and acrylic, measured 340 cm x 110 cm and depicts a sinuous line reminiscent of a river seen from aloft, snaking its way across the landscape, a joyous umbilical chord of life.

Martin Kizur's vibrant works exploded across the canvas. Strong colour and purposeful mark-making combined to create his vision of the tropics. A Yugoslavian trained artist, Kizur has won major prizes in Europe and Australia and is currently working as a lecturer at James Cook University.

The sense of humour of Maleny-based artist Di West is evident in many of her works and is clearly seen in her whimsical bronze 'Man in a Blue Shirt'.



DiViDe's paintings are also very much in focus. An artist with a wide scope of interest, DiViDe works in the realm of realism and social commentary. His works depict the world he sees around him with subjects ranging from the humble if annoying sandfly to breakfast rituals in Townsville. His skill at depicting the character of his subjects is evident in the many portraits that were on show at Martas Gallery & café.

Lee-Anne Trewartha's work deviates from most of the other pieces shown at the gallery by their absence of colour, although they more than make up for this in their imagery. The works were inspired by the baroque period of history and, although using a restricted palette of tonal black, white and grey, manage to convey a broad scope of emotion and atmosphere.

The gallery also has plans to host musical evenings with their first 'World Music Café' highlighting the musical offerings of Dr. Mick & The Honourably Vic and *The Blessed Outlaws* on 18th March and *Double Play*, Tinaka Henton and Joff (Jon Weyland) on 25th March.

The gallery is looking for work by Modern, contemporary artists, both established and emerging, and would welcome approaches from both local and other visual artists as well as those by practitioners in other areas of the arts. They can be contacted on 07 4724 5107 or by email on info@martasgallery.com.au.

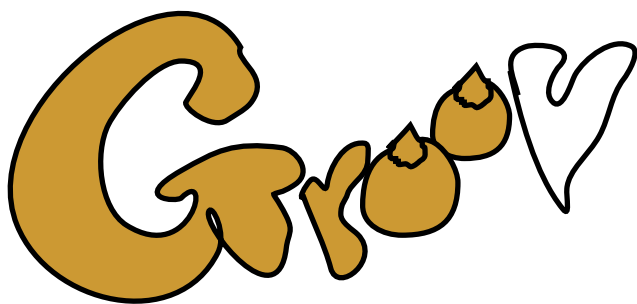


Above right: Martas Gallery and Café director, Doris Kuenstler, in front of *Eternal Life* by Anthony Cuthbertson. Photo: Jacqui Stock

Above: Di West, *Man in a blue shirt*, bronze and black granite.

Right: Di West, *Bon Voyage*, bronze on sandstone, 38 x 33 x 20 cm.





Bringing Art to the Coffee

Renee Joyce

Townsville's growing Visual Arts scene has a fresh face who is taking art to the coffee scene.

Local artist and arts worker Kath Cornwall has decided to act, rather than talk when it comes to promoting Visual Arts in Townsville, creating *Groov*, a business that provides original art for Townsville's cafés and restaurants. *Groov* not only benefits businesses, it also offers artists the opportunity to show their work outside of a Gallery environment.

Groov began in 2004 with Kath approaching Ladah Café and Catering for somewhere to show her work, "I had an idea in mind to utilize an existing space without having to pay rent and create a possibility for my own art." It didn't take long for Kath to take an altruistic turn and use *Groov* to bring original art to the people of Townsville in their regular haunts.

From personal experience, Kath recognized that for a growing number of Townsville artists the opportunity to showcase their art outside the "white cube" of contemporary gallery space and integrate their work into popular urban environments, such as cafés and restaurants, offers the hope of reaching new audiences and selling their art. As Kath herself noted when starting her business, bringing art to the people had it benefits. "Many people who had not studied or created art themselves were detached from the idea of buying art and focused on their lack of understanding rather than enjoying it. I figured by bringing art out of the gallery environment and into the café I would be bringing art into everyday consciousness a little more and opening people's minds."

In *Groov*, Kath Cornwall has found support from a number of businesses in Townsville that are keen to make a move away from the current trend of using homogenized decorator items to enhance their wall space and move toward supporting local talent by installing original art works. *Groov* has established a network of CBD and Palmer Street businesses that have been willing to take the plunge into originality: Table 51, Ladah Café and Catering, Café Bambini and Plant Essentials. This is only the start for *Groov*, with Kath initiating the opportunity to create mutually beneficial partnerships with businesses, rather than just asking for support. "Artwork has the possibility of attracting attention to an establishment, even creating new customers, so it can be of great benefit to a business."

The response to *Groov* has been positive in the local Arts community with artists keen to make the most of the opportunities to showcase their work. This is not the only benefit of a business like *Groov* for artists, as "they (artists) are allowed the luxury of focusing on their concepts and practice, whilst time, dates, logistics and installation worries are taken care of by *Groov*."

That said, *Groov* has come up against some skepticism regarding the positive benefits of "showing art" in business environments and the likelihood that work will be sold! Kath Cornwall remains honest and optimistic about sales: "that is the risk in creative production, you never know what will sell, who will see it and find a connection with your work." Skepticism aside, *Groov* has a strong following of artists including; Shane Keen, Jacqueline Jakovljevic, Terri Cooper, Sandra Guy, Theresa Richardson, Yasmin Hunter, Imogen Rogers, Emmanuel McCarthy, Geraldine Hermann, Amanda Howard, Sandra Guy, Mich éle Devezze, Kelly Bianci and Kath Cornwall herself.



So what does the future hold for a business like *Groov* in Townsville? Well, with Kelly Bianci featuring at Ladah from 9th February and Geraldine Hermann featuring at Table 51 from 15th April, it looks like things are going from strength to strength. According to Kath, the key aim for the future of *Groov* is to create a hub of thriving art within Townsville city, to make it fun to visit and to create opportunities for artists work to be seen.

So make a choice... Instead of frequenting just "any" café, choose somewhere that supports original art or petition your own local café to make a change for the better and support local artists and the vibrant young business woman who is promoting them.

Interested businesses and artists can contact *Groov*'s Kath Cornwall on 0413402839 for further information or to register their interest.

Above: Kath Cornwall, *Strength*, 2007

HAPPY Birthday

A Little White Space

One year on and going strong!

The A Little White Space (ALWS) arts initiative is turning ONE in March with a fabulous birthday bash on 22nd March showcasing the work of local artists Shane Keen and Angela Hughes. So come join us for the party Relax, and enjoy a locally brewed beer while taking in the art. ALWS is situated in one of Townsville's oldest heritage buildings within the Brewery Café and wine bar at 252 Flinders Mall.

Artists involved in ALWS recognized the need for a non-profit space that's free for emerging artists to experiment

in, and the artists involved have a freshness and an honesty that is sometimes lacking in a lot of regurgitated commercial art. The ALWS focuses on the work of young, and emerging contemporary artists, including older artists who may be re-emerging from a hiatus, with a preference for interactive, and politically edgy work.

This year was full of exciting events for ALWS such as A Really Short Film Festival, which showcased local and national short experimental films and will continue in August 2008. We also launched Art Gaze, which we are very proud to mutually support, along with another new street art publication, Art Ground.

As a non-profit initiative we rely on sponsor support and would especially like to thank Peter Summers of the Brewery, along with Casper Schougaard and Sarah Hill of TBD Communication and Design, and the fabulous Express Printing. To all our other supporters and colleagues we sincerely thank you all for making 2007 such a great year for ALWS. We look forward to seeing you at our birthday celebrations and future exhibitions. For more details, refer to advertisement on page 6.

Nature of Thuringowa

Community art project a fun event

Quintin Wood

In the early afternoon of 23rd January, a group of young artists gathered on the Village Green of Thuringowa's Riverway Arts Centre for the installation of their project *Nature of Thuringowa*. On this tropically warm day in North Queensland it was a noble idea for the installation to occur in the ample cool provided by a large shady tree. This was anything but a formal event. It was a relaxed atmosphere of Townsville and Thuringowa youths displaying the product of their past weeks fun process.

The group of young artists quickly began to install the work, which on first glance seemed to be a structure of red tape and old electrical wire holding together two tall towers of recycled seedling pots and plug trays supplied by Jackie Thomas of Bennalla Nursery. Plug trays and seedling pots are used in nurseries for the birth and growth of plants. Their use in this sculptural piece is reflective of the growth of the Townsville and Thuringowa regions and how their amalgamation will be like a rebirth of ideas and feelings. The first of these towers was a depiction of Townsville; very structured, it was built in geometric shapes with the seedling pots. The structure (supported with electrical wires tied to a park bench to keep it erect)

spawned twisted pieces of the metal tops off suspension files, which were intended to represent the way the council processes things, starting out well formed and ending up twisted and bent. The electrical wires extended out like the tentacles of an octopus, again symbolising the council reaching out to the smaller communities surrounding Townsville, such as Northern Beaches, Bushland Beach and



Woodstock. The red tape stood for just that; it symbolised the bureaucratic nature of the beast as Townsville reaches out to swallow up everything surrounding it. Thuringowa

Above: Installation of artwork at Riverway Arts Centre. Photo: Quintin Wood

was created with a rolled up mass of plug trays to represent it more as a rounded, unravelling object being engulfed by Townsville. It unravels into the shape of the Ross River, providing a point of separation between the two structures.

The *Nature of Thuringowa community art project* truly was a fun event for the youths involved. When Jack Gillespie, a teenager involved in the project, jumped up and down exclaiming "This is Fun", the project coordinator and director of Umbrella Studio, Vicki Salisbury, suggested using his exclamation as a title for this article. Hearing about the project through his father Richard, a known local artist and technician at James Cook University, Jack was surprised to find himself actually creating art for a change instead of moving furniture and hanging pictures as he has done with his father on his previous holidays. Jack said, "I enjoyed the project because everyone that was there wanted to be there, it was a fun experience."

consider what Thuringowa means to young people. Her focus was to create a youth-oriented workshop with the assistance of two strong facilitators, local artists Kalven Lloyd-Smith and Alison McDonald. Salisbury commented that the aims of the project were achieved. These were to develop a place where young people could work together creatively and provide an opportunity for young artists to develop their professional practice. "We will be doing more," she said. The next project planned will be creating T-Shirts for TAG. Salisbury also commented that this project was not about the end result of the art piece as much as it was about the process of working as a team. The group were given the task of representing Townsville and Thuringowa and their feeling of the amalgamation in an art piece, utilising the recycled materials they were supplied. Lloyd-Smith praised the young artists involved, "The project was very well done. The group developed the idea and decided how the project would go forward."



Also involved in the project was a local art teacher at Saint Anthony's Catholic College, Gerard Marano, who commented, "The chance to work with local artists in a creative atmosphere such as Umbrella studio is such a valuable experience for budding young artists and art educators such as myself. The ability to speak and interact with other like-minded people will ensure I will be a willing volunteer if the opportunity to do this again occurs."

Other artists involved in the project included Steve Mangles, Emma Mulvaney, Zoe Henry, Douglas Arana, John Bradshaw, Aden Brind, Allison Stewart, Jason Hosking and Aaron Ashley, who all had similar feelings about the experience.

The *Nature of Thuringowa Community Art Project* began as Salisbury's baby, whom with the amalgamation of Townsville and Thuringowa saw the opportunity to

The sculpture was only on display at Riverway from 2.00pm to 3.30pm. VIP's of Umbrella Studios and Riverway Arts Centre were given formal invitation and the general public were invited. The project was sponsored by Umbrella Studio, Riverway, Thuringowa, and Bennalla Wholesale Nursery. Thuringowa has extended an invitation for the piece to be displayed again on the 8th of March for the celebration of the community.

Above: Members of the workshop at the completion of installation, Riverway Arts Centre. Photo: Quintin Wood

Sylvia Ditchburn

Beijing Residency

Jacqui Stock

Standing outside Sylvia Ditchburn's gallery garden, the gate is guarded by her 'Iron Maiden', also known as 'The Past in the Present'. This is a work completed for the 2007 Thuringowa River Festival and the serene beauty of the setting strikes me.

No wonder she is so enamoured with our Australian landscape.

Sylvia opens the gate and invites me in, offering me a cup of tea or some water before we start.

Sitting together in her studio we are surrounded by examples of Sylvia's busy life as a working artist. A commissioned painting of the Paluma rainforest, a work in progress, sits on her easel. Other pieces were lined up neatly in her copious storage area, the tools of her trade, brushes paints etc could be seen on the large working surfaces either ready for use or easily accessed.

We settled down beside a pile of photographs of her recent trip to Beijing to discuss the purpose of my visit, her most recent artist's residency.

Anne Lord, another well-known local artist, who had herself just returned from China, sparked Sylvia's initial interest in the trip when giving an Artists Talk at James Cook University. Intrigued, Sylvia determined to do some research.

"I looked up the website and thought it might be a bit sexier and more dangerous than many of the other places you could go to," said Sylvia laughing.



Above middle: The transportation of Ditchburn's canvas', Beijing, 2007.

Above Right: Ditchburn at a social event in Beijing.

Above: Ditchburn, Temple of Heaven, Beijing, 2007.

Beginning the application process shortly afterward, Sylvia sent examples of her work; details of previous residencies and of course her curriculum vitae to the Red Gate Gallery in the Dongbianmen Watchtower in Beijing.

Through discussion with Brian Wallace, the Director of the Gallery, it was determined that a studio apartment in Bei Gao would best suit Sylvia's purposes. This gave her the space she needed to paint while in residence and also the opportunity to interact with other invited artists.

In November 2007, Sylvia and her husband set off on their adventure.

When asked 'What was your favourite thing about Beijing?' Sylvia's face lights up, memories flooding in.

"The people, the friendliness of the people, especially with the language differences,"

"The greetings, Ni Hao (pronounced Nee HaOW) and Syeh Syeh (pronounced Shay shay) hello and thank you, they always get you by," Sylvia said smiling broadly.

"People appreciate that you at least know a little bit of their language."



The gallery gives visitors a support package on arrival, including a taxi book complete with translations for both visitors and the taxi drivers, it shows the various markets, galleries, tourist destinations, restaurants and necessities, like hospitals.

Some of the most valuable information is acquired during social activities with other artists keen to share their knowledge of the best places to eat and the most interesting places to see.

Socializing is definitely an aspect of the residency, with resident artists invited to all Red Gate events, artist talks and the legendary Bei Gao barbeques.

Exhibition openings are often repeated several times with dancers and musicians, as well as a sit down meal for as many as forty guests. This, combined with the usual 'getting together' of the artists themselves, makes for an extremely enjoyable time.

China is a country of contrasts. The old and the new combine together in a charming and extremely busy way, with such sights as a donkey drawn cart on a road, teeming with cars and buses being in no way unusual. It is, in fact, the norm.

Beijing contains many fine galleries like, the Red Gate Gallery, which is in the heritage area of Beijing, and the Dashanzi Art District found in the Chaoyang District, also known as the Factory 798 District, all of which house a wide range of high-quality contemporary Chinese artworks.

"It was a very exciting time, the amount of artwork that's there is amazing," Sylvia said.

I remind her that she said her favourite thing about Beijing was the people and comment that the artwork also seems to have made a deep impression.

"You might have to change that," she says with a laugh, "I was impressed by the art, Beijing itself was extremely friendly but the artwork was fantastic."

While in China, Sylvia was given the opportunity to show her works in a group exhibition at the Pickle Art Gallery, owned by local artist and entrepreneur, Li Gang.

The works were inspired by Sylvia's experiences in Beijing. In 'Downtown Beijing' Sylvia stepped away from her more usual style in order to highlight the chaos of energy, colours and the distinctive black wires suspended from power poles throughout the area.



Falling Leaves is a celebration of the leaves of autumn. The leaves carpet the ground and create a golden sheen over much of the city. The painting also incorporates hints of the blues and greens that are so prevalent but somewhat obscured.

Time of Falling Leaves is all about the trees. Many trees are considered to be of heritage value in the city and it is not unusual to see branches propped up by support beams. The skeletal forms, empty of their foliage, creating a striking subject for Sylvia to work with.

Costs are the responsibility of the resident artist, with the Red Gate Gallery providing the situation, the support and the invitation to be a part of this incredible opportunity. The Gallery encourages artists to try and secure grant funding and will provide letters of confirmation to accompany grant proposals. They do, however, suggest that the artist be prepared to carry the costs themselves if funding is not forthcoming in the sometimes short time frame. Applications and bookings are often made well in advance of the trip.

A flight to Beijing costs approximately \$1100 and rental of the studio is around \$1000 / month. Food costs are negligible, as are the costs of art materials. The latter are easily sourced from amongst the 30 or so specialist shops surrounding the studio complex.



Email Brian Wallace at the redgategallery@aer.net.cn or go to www.redgategallery.com to find information on the residency program.

When asked, "Would she go again?" Sylvia's sparkling eyes and irrepressible smile said it all.

"Where is she going next?" Siberia, of course.



From top: Horse and cart amongst traffic, Beijing, 2007.

Sylvia Ditchburn, *Downtown Beijing*, 2007.

Sylvia Ditchburn, *Falling Leaves*, 2007.

Inspiration for *Time of Falling Leaves*, Beijing, 2007.

Sylvia Ditchburn, *Time of Falling Leaves*, Beijing, 2007.



Profiling local talent

Ann-Marie Lesca

Local artist Alison McDonald was born and bred in Geelong before moving to Townsville nearly 20 years ago. Alison is married with one son, who she adores, and is extremely passionate about art.

Alison's art education began from when she was very young. She was born into a family of artists. Her grandfather was a cartoonist and her grandmother was a sculptor. These are amongst a long list of creative relatives. Alison formerly continued studying art at High School in Shepparton, Victoria, at Preston TAFE in Melbourne and then moved around a great deal before settling to study at James Cook University in Townsville. She graduated with a Bachelor of Visual Arts degree with honours. Gaining casual employment at James Cook University as a Sculpture Lecturer about three years ago, Alison is also employed by Umbrella Studio as a gallery assistant.

Predominantly a sculptor, Alison frequently spends time drawing in her journals. Although her journals are not as highly regarded, Alison feels they help to make her a better sculptor. Alison explained that drawing helps her get the ideas flowing freely to see how they can work in 3D.

Recycled and everyday objects are her favourite material. Alison often welds together small everyday metal objects or joins PET plastic to form her artworks. She likes to use

materials that have had a history. Nothing goes to waste, even if it means collecting the plastic lids off the PET plastic bottles to create a masterpiece.

The size of Alison's artwork is dependent on the material she is using and location of where the piece is to be situated. She likes to be versatile.

Throughout her artwork she utilizes recycled materials, which are used repetitively. She feels that her recycled materials are often a metaphor of people. The more original the material is, the better it is. Alison relates her recycling art form to the following quote:

We ourselves have been discarded or rejected by other human beings; more or less on a daily basis, we are forced to recover, scrape together and reassemble fragments of ourselves. (Lea Vergine, *When Trash Becomes Art*)

Her greatest influences are Australian artists: Fiona Hall, who uses sardine cans in her artwork, and Donna Marcus, who also utilizes recycled materials repetitively. Another influence is the work of English artist Antony Gormley.

Alison's artwork can be viewed at her upcoming exhibition, *A Chain Reaction*, at Umbrella Studio.



A Chain Reaction

At Umbrella Studio until 30th March 2008

Our lives are not determined by what happens to us but by how we react to what happens, not by what life brings to us, but by the attitude we bring to life. A positive attitude causes a chain reaction of positive thoughts, events, and outcomes. It is a catalyst; a spark that creates extraordinary results.'

Anonymous



*Far above right: Alison McDonald

Above left: Close up of sculpture by McDonald

Above : Close up of sculpture by Alison McDonald

Reviews

Pouch

Cassandra Schultz

Umbrella Studio

18th January - 17th February 2008

Seven wallaby skins hang on the wall, seven handcrafted books lay across a long table, seven small creatures are enclosed individually under glass and a small aeroplane made mostly of fur overlooks the room. These four works make up Schultz's exhibition *Pouch*, which combines beautiful craftsmanship with intriguing cultural interpretations.

The exhibition concept began with Schultz writing a story about a kangaroo. The kangaroo, with a joey in her pouch, became in danger and hopped into nearby water where she swam until she reached safe land. When she reached the land and let her joey out of her pouch, she found the joey was not as she thought. It now had fish-like characteristics, as a majority of the joey's life was spent in water, and it had adapted to its environment.

Schultz wrote the story and bound it beautifully using a combination of kangaroo skin and fish scales. Not intending anything further for this story, Schultz recalls the book being admired in Singapore for its beauty, by those who could not read the language in which it was written. This prompted Schultz to later have the story translated into the other three main languages spoken in Singapore. Schultz did not, however, translate the original

version directly into three other languages, but rather created her 'Chinese Whispers' series. Firstly, the story was translated into Mandarin. The mandarin version was then translated back to English, this new English version was translated into Jawi, then the Jawi version back to English, then to Tamil and again back to English. The result was seven books, all handcrafted in a different style to correspond with traditions of each language, all covered with

skin and scales and each with a slightly different interpretation of the story. Schultz recalled her excitement with each translation, explaining how she laid out each version side by side and compared them page by page to recognise each change that was caused by the inability to

translate exact sentences between languages. The most obvious difference is the title of the story. The first story is called *Pouch* and is about a joey in its mother's pouch, while the last version is called *Sack* and is about a man with his child in a sack. Each story, according to Schultz, has its own poetic flow and meaning.

The second part to the exhibition displays seven creatures under glass, scattered around the gallery, appearing strangely familiar. They are all small sculptures of Australian animals, or at least an interpretation of Australian animals. While in Singapore, Schultz visited a joss stick maker by the name of Amos Tay and asked him to make seven sculptures based on images that she gave him. The images were early colonial drawings of Australian animals, though this was not told to Tay. The creatures that emerged are recognisable but unnatural and bizarre. There are fangs where there shouldn't be, limbs that hang in unnatural positions, and a koala with a face resembling a traditional mask. With a similar concept to that of the 'Chinese

Whispers' series, the Antipodean series is a sculptural interpretation of naïve European drawings of Australian animals.

Seven wallaby skins, hung on the wall, make up the third part of the exhibition. They have been finely shaved to mark out maps, compass settings and geographical markings. They each depict early colonial records of Australia, yet they all have minor inaccuracies. This ties in to the theme of mistranslations, in this case, geographical

records from early Australian explorers.

The scrap fur that was shaved from the wallaby skins was used to make the small plane that overlooks the exhibition. The only other material used, Schultz admitted, was a bit of her own hair to help hold it together. The plane is simply a symbol for travel, tying the exhibition together. Schultz took her inspiration from time spent between Singapore and Australia and it is an aeroplane that provides the pathway between cultures.

Through beautiful craftsmanship, *Pouch* shows the intriguing results of a translation of an interpretation and demonstrates the cultural influence that can impact on our view.

Jak Henson

Far above: Cassandra Schultz, *Pouch*, Umbrella Studio, 2008. Photo: Jak Henson

Far left: Cassandra Schultz, *Chinese Whispers* series. 2008.

Left: Cassandra Schultz, *Antipodean* series, Incense figurines, cinnamon wood paste, commissioned from local Singaporean traditional joss stick maker, Mr Amos Tay.



At First Blush

Jacqueline Jakovljevic

Perc Tucker Regional Gallery

19th February – 9th March 2008

At First Blush (idiom): At the first review or consideration of a matter.

Jacqueline Jakovljevic is one of an exciting group of young female artists in Australia, creating new ground in contemporary art through the combination of traditional representations of the feminine with contemporary mediums and concerns. The work of Townsville artist Jakovljevic accurately represents this freshness and excitement present in contemporary Australian art and *At First Blush* is a poignant representation of this.

Jakovljevic's exhibition *At First Blush* encompasses a number of new works featuring Jakovljevic's signature aesthetic which marries traditional media, feminine iconography and contemporary street art; alongside some retrospective works from previous smaller exhibitions.

Viewers who have seen any of Jakovljevic's previous exhibitions will appreciate that *At First Blush*, is both a culmination of 10 years of artistic development and a fresh starting point for the artist. The exhibition represents a movement away from the darker aesthetics and concerns of Jakovljevic's earlier works into a new direction complete with a fresh sense of lightness and delicacy. These recent artworks have achieved an aesthetic refinement, simplicity and beauty previously unseen in Jakovljevic's work. *At First Blush* is the art of a young woman who, with a sense of personal understanding, has accepted herself and the world for all the contradictions and complexities that life presents. She has brought this theme to fruition in *At First Blush*, through her use of texture and layering, juxtaposed against delicate patterning and meandering lines.

A signature of Jakovljevic's recent artworks has been the use of lace and lace patterning to enhance the sense of texture and depth. Lace patterning features in a number of pieces in *At First Blush* to create an uncompromising tactility and softness to the artworks. The exhibition features a number of large canvas artworks that use lace patterning layered with aerosols and oils to create softly rendered scenes in vibrant pinks, stark white and definitive blacks. These works are dominant in the exhibition and indicate a conscious departure from the smaller, more intimate works of Jakovljevic's last exhibition.

At First Blush also includes a number of functional sculptural objects. Again these works feature Jakovljevic's signature emphasis on texture, layering and feminine iconography, though in this case in a more tangible form with the objects being primarily created from lace lingerie. The stark

almost clinical white of these items is striking, directing the eye to the inherent detail of the material from which they are created.

The strength of this exhibition is the strong use of colour and texture, as they equally represent the excitement, complexity and depth that the artist has reached in her art and life. The vibrant, sometimes garish pinks evoke a sense of energy, lightness and joy whilst also sometimes seeming overtly intense and dominating. In contrast, the stark whites and blacks produce highlights in the pinks, giving the works balance. The use of aerosol paints in the works imbue the vibrant pinks, stark black and white accents with a sense of softness to loosen the traditional structure of the works.



At First Blush isn't an exhibition laden with agendas or issues; it is a poetic reflection of a young creative contemporary woman carving her niche in the artistic landscape. Jakovljevic's ability to combine traditionally feminine iconography of floral design, lace and meandering line, with the harshness, and implied aggression of street art will endear you to her works. Beautiful, achingly aware and honest, *At First Blush* is an exhibition not to be missed.

At First Blush opened at the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery on 19th February 2008 and runs until 9 March.

Renee Joyce

Above: Jacqueline Jakovljevic, Untitled, 2007, Oil and aerosol on canvas.

Finger Licking Good Members Exhibition Umbrella Studio 14th December - 17th December 2008

Eyes were feasted and taste buds stimulated at the banquet of visual treats and crafty culinary creations at the Umbrella Studio 2007 fundraising auction on 14 December.

The banquet table in the Main Space was surrounded by sweet girls in pink, blue and lilac, a little spice, natures' sugars and all things nice. A five tier chocolate fountain cascaded warm, liquid delicious milk chocolate atop a very large plum pudding. Plates of huge strawberries, white and pink marshmallows and yummy slices of cake were dipped into the cascades and eaten by adults and children alike. It was a bit of a worry to know which was the real food and that which was not. Thankfully, the strawberries, marshmallows and cake were real! The magnificent fountain was supplied by *Tanya Events*. At least one young girl had placed her tongue under the flowing liquid and then seemed to enjoy playing with the chocolate that adorned her hair, forehead and nose.

Twenty-five local artists donated their artwork to the banquet. The works were auctioned to raise funds for a video projector to compliment the donation of a plasma screen TV by AV Design. Colin Edwards, the owner of Sweethearts, was the curator of the fun-filled evening and his sponsorship included a one thousand dollar gift voucher for his retail outlet. The voucher raffle was a high

point of the evening. Colin said that he wanted to get more people involved with the Members event and linked with the festive Christmas holiday season, it should be (and was) a great party. Beautiful jewellery by Margot Douglas, mini sculpture by Jenny Mulcahy, woven baskets, glass platters and much more all sold competitively amid much laughter.

Rod Cockroft



Art in the Burdekin Artcove Gallery January 2008

On a recent visit to The Artcove Gallery in Ayr, a local exhibition stood out for its diverse range of beautiful artwork.

One of the more striking artworks was Anna Mango's *Sunrise*. The thick enamel layers intensify the painting, making it come to life. Having similar qualities to the work of Fred Williams' landscape paintings, this work emphasizes the brushstrokes and use of colour.

Uli Liessmann uses pastels on paper to "reveal subtle narratives with interesting scenarios". His paintings, such as *Enticement*, are quite confronting and almost caricature-like.

Local mosaicist, Claudia Williams, displays exquisite mosaic sculptural pieces. They range from goanna's to water fountains. The use of vibrant colours brings out the unique qualities in each piece.

Caroline Starkey features beautiful pottery frogs with an incredible attention to detail and accuracy.

Co-Ordinator of the gallery, Sandy Milani, said that she is trying to keep the gallery less confronting by having the artworks scattered throughout the space.



These four artists are accompanied by many other talented Burdekin artists who also exhibit their works in The Artcove Gallery, located at Shop 2, 107 Queen Street, Ayr.

Ann-Marie Lesca



From top: chocolate fountain, supplied by Tanya Events, Umbrella Studio, 2007.

Anna Mango, Artcove Gallery 2008.

Uli Liessmann, Artcove Gallery 2008.

Claudia Williams, Artcove Gallery 2008.

www.umbrella.org.au

22 FEB - 30 MAR

A CHAIN REACTION

Alison McDonald

MEET THE PRESS

Rhonda Stevens & Margot Laver

TUBEWORMS

Cindy Parker

FLOTSAM GET-SOME

Beach Women Artists

4 APRIL - 11 MAY

DRAWN AND QUARTERED

Donna Foley

SWEET CRUSH

Clive Hutchison & David Salisbury

THE MONEY MAKERS

Shirley Collins

16 MAY - 22 JUNE

CREATURE

Samuel Tupou, Robyn Baker, Kristin
Tennyson, Ed Koumans, Ross Hucks,
Shireen Talibudeen, Rebecca Youdell,
Russell Milledge - image courtesy of Bonemap

